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NORTH WESTERN ONTARIO

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THE DISTRICTS

OF

THUNDER BAY AND ALGOMA.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION,

BY G. R. PATTULLO,
ONTARIO COMMISSIONER.

Together with the Opinions of Prominent Residents, Old Pioneers, Eminent Scientists, Explorers, Special Correspondents, Travellers and others, upon the Territory's Varied Resources Cereal, Mineral and Timber; and also of its Matchless Scenery.

Prepared and Published in connection with the Ontario Government's Exhibit of Cereals and Minerals at the principal Eastern Exhibitions of the Province.

Port Arthur, Ont.:
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GENERAL FEATURES.

To say that the country lying between Port Savanne and Cross Lake—and in general outline this is very similar to the country lying to the North of Lake Superior—was an earthly paradise, or a very promising agricultural region, would be a very grave error. It is not now, and never will be, the home of a large and prosperous agricultural population. On the other hand, it is a great mistake to suppose that the Disputed Territory is destitute of good farming land. From Rainy Lake to Lake of the Woods there is a broad belt of very fertile and lightly timbered land, that will furnish homes for a prosperous farming community of no insignificant dimensions. What the width of this belt of choice land is has not as yet been determined, but its length is not less than from 90 to 100 miles. Formerly it was supposed to have an average width of seven miles, but more recent and extended explorations by thoroughly reliable men have brought to light the fact that the belt of first rate farming land along the north bank of Rainy River is very much wider than it was at first supposed to be. Elsewhere the views of gentlemen well acquainted with this portion of the Territory are given at some length, and the reader will be convinced that in the valley of Rainy River, at least, farmers can make homes for themselves. that promise quite as well as the splendid prairie farms of Manitoba and the Northwest. The climate of this particular portion of the "debateable land" is peculiarly favorable to luxuriant vegetation. The summers, though not long, are hot and humid. This condition, together

with the rich black loam which overlays a clay and gravel subsoil to a depth of from two to four feet, renders the region particularly well adapted to the production of all sorts of cereals. Outside the Rainy Lake and Rainy River region there are no extensive and unbroken tracts of agricultural land of any value. It must not be understood, however, that among the rugged Laurentian hills no good land is to be found. Indeed there are many valleys of much more than ordinary fertility, but these are small and are often found almost completely shut in by sterile rocky ridges. There are hundreds of hillsides where rich succulent grasses grow in abundance, but even here the settler would not often find a farm that would compare in grain producing power with those that are found on the boundless prairies of the great Northwest. The settler who farms within the limits of the Disputed Territory (excepting in the Rainy Lake and Rainy River districts) will be the man who prefers hill and dale to broad plains, who prefers mixed agriculture to grain growing, or who prefers sheep or dairy farming to either. Here the farmer can enjoy beautiful and picturesque scenery, excellent fishing, hunting and trapping, and should his inclinations lead him in that direction, he can occasionally devote a day or two to prospecting for economic or precious minerals, with reasonable prospects of success. But it is not for one moment to be supposed that, except in the case of the district previously alluded to, the Disputed Territory, can hold out any very brilliant prospects to the farmer who expects to become rich through grain growing. On the other hand the abundance of natural shelter, the sweet short grasses growing on the hillsides, the unlimited ranges and the springs of sweet pure water to be found flowing from beneath the granite ridges, all point to this region as one destined by nature to be the home of a pastoral population. Any one who knows the farming sections of Northern Ontario and Quebec, knows that these Laurentian hills have been noted for products of mutton, cheese and butter, that have compared favorably with those of the oldest and most prosperous sections of those provinces. Indeed it is a well known fact that to-day no better mutton is to be found in the Cana-

dian Market than that of the sheep fattened on the short sweet grasses of the Laurentian hills of North Hastings.

Of the rich mineral prospects of this territory it is now almost unnecessary to speak. As far as it has been prospected it promises as well as any mining region in the known world; and as soon as the boundary question shall have been finally settled, it will no doubt develope in such a way as to fully justify all the bright predictions that have been made concerning its future.

Throughout the greater portion of the Disputed Territory, outside the Rainy Lake and Rainy River District, the country consists of low rocky ridges and narrow fertile valleys, following each other in rapid succession, though the prospect is often beautified by pretty little lakelets many of which are fairly teeming with excellent fish. Hay marshes are also abundant and towards the eastern portion of the territory muskegs of very considerable acreage are numerous. In the older portions of the Dominion the character and nature of these muskegs are not properly understood. If they were found in old Canada, they would be called cranberry marshes. With suitable efforts at drainage the greater part of these muskegs could be made rich and productive tracts; but until land shall have become much more difficult to obtain in Canada than it is now, it is not at all probable that much money will be expended in such enterprises. The timber in the Disputed Territory though not large is of a very fair quality and on account of its proximity to the great Prairie Market must always be valuable. The traveller in passing through this country by the railway is inclined to under-estimate it. Much of the timber along the line has been destroyed by the running of fires employed at first in clearing the right of way for the road. The game has been scared away by the large laboring population employed in the construction of the road, and altogether the country immediately adjacent to the railway presents a bleaker, drearier and more uninviting appearance than any other portion of the territory.

One of the strong points of the Disputed Territory is Lake of the Woods. This is not merely owing to the immense value in the shape of economic and precious metals locked up

in its many thousands of wood-crowned and rock girdled islets, and not alone the value of the many square miles of unscathed timber to be found on its islands and shores; it is not alone its value as a water way and outlet for the Rainy Lake and Rainy River District, and it is not alone that it is one of the most charming regions in which to take a summer holiday to be found anywhere in this continent, but it is all these combined.

AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITIES OF THE ALGOMA DISTRICT.

Below will be found the opinions of several prominent residents, old pioneers, eminent scientists, explorers, special correspondents, travellers and others, with reference to the capabilities, agricultural, stock, timber and mineral, as also of the matchless and picturesque scenery of North-Western Ontario and the adjoining Districts of Thunder Bay and Algoma. Referring to the Agricultural capabilities of Algoma—

JOHN M. HAMILTON, Esq., Crown Attorney at Sault Ste. Marie, a most competent and impartial critic, writes:

"After a residence of upwards of twenty years in Algoma East, I can confidently say that wheat and other grains are as easily grown and ripened in many parts of the District as in the older and better settled portions of Ontario.

"Hay is a most abundant and unfailing crop, and is now selling in this neighborhood for less than eight dollars per ton.

"The rivers and lakes afford a certain and easy livelihood to those fishermen who live on their banks and shores.

"At this date of writing (August 30th, 1883) we are having splendid harvest weather, with a high barometer and thermometer.

"Oats, potatoes and all kinds of roots grow in all parts of this district most luxuriantly."

W. H. CARNEY, Esq., Sheriff of the District of Algoma, who may be said to have travelled over every foot of the District, and who has taken an active part in the promotion of its agricultural and other resources, writes:

"Having had opportunities of visiting the main land, North Shore, and the principal islands in the eastern part of Algoma District during the present season, and being connected with the District Agricultural Society, since organization in the year 1868, I noted with interest the great improvements made in agriculture in the district along the route of my travels. I never saw a better promise of an abundant yield.

There are some exceptions, owing to the wet spring, especially in the low lands and in the heavier soil, for want of proper drainage. The hay, clover and timothy crops are extra heavy and have been generally well harvested. Fall wheat is magnificent and housed in splendid condition. Spring wheat equally good and is now being cut in good order. Oats promise an abundant crop, which in some cases is being harvested. Peas are also being harvested, and the yield is splendid, without a blemish; no pea bug has made its appearance in the district. Barley, rye, buckwheat and flax are equally good. Hops growing luxuriantly and heavy laden. The Indian corn is not as good this season as in former years. This is owing to the wet spring; generally it has been a good crop. Root crops cannot be surpassed. In fact this district is hard to be; equalled both in yield and quality. Garden vegetables are in unusual abundance and of the best quality. I notice the potato bug has made its appearance generally throughout the district. I obtained apples growing in several localities, principally on the islands. Strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries cultivated and wild in abundance. Currants in all their varieties excellent.

"Having resided in the District nearly twenty years, and from observations more or less during that time, I can unhesitatingly assert that the District of Algoma is well adapted for agricultural pursuits. Having abundance of good water, and being well timbered, the grazing is of the best quality. The District is troubled very seldom with frosts which injure crops no frost being in the ground on the opening of spring, seed can be sown early in April, and where fall ploughing has been done the ground is ready for the seed as soon as the snow leaves the ground. Grass springs up immediately, and cattle can be turned loose to graze for themselves."

LORENZO LONDRY, a well-known farmer, near Sault Ste. Marie, says:

"I have lived in Algoma for some eight years; I formerly lived in the county of Grey; I find the winter healthier here than in Ontario, for the simple reason that the weather is not so changeable, and is dry under foot. This country is well adapted for grain growing; we have fine crops this season. I have just arrived home from a trip in Eastern Ontario, and I can safely say that the crops there are not so good as ours generally. The world cannot beat our peas; consequently we can raise any amount of pork; also stock of all kinds and dairy products; for we can grow any amount of hay and the pasture is always green—never dried up and parched with the sun as

below. We also get refreshing showers of rain more frequently than below. As far as vegetables are concerned, I never saw better. We do not have to feed our stock here any longer than below; as soon as the snow leaves there is plenty of feed for cattle, as vegetation starts before all the snow is gone, and the fields continue green till the snow falls about the first of December, and winter sets in. We have plenty of hard wood for fuel, cedar for fencing and pine for building purposes; and beautiful streams which afford plenty of good water for man and for beast. Doctors make out very poorly here as the people are very healthy. Any man can do well here if he chooses to work; I never was in any country where there was more money for less work. For a new country we have good schools and churches of nearly every denomination,—everything to make one comfortable and happy."

CHAS. J. BAMPTON, Esq., Registrar at Sault Ste. Marie, writes:

"I have been a resident of Sault Ste. Marie, in the central portion of the District of Algoma, since 1860. During that period I have travelled on foot, or by canoe on the lakes, over the greater part of the neighborhood, that is to say the tract lying between Batchawaning Bay on Lake Superior and the River Thessalon on Huron. I have been Assessor of the Municipality of Sault Ste. Marie, Secretary of the Algoma Electoral Division Society; have had an extended experience as an Appraiser, both of town and country property; I now occupy the position of Registrar of Deeds for Algoma.

"With reference to agriculture, I would say that I do not believe that from its broken and rocky formation this will ever become, in the full acceptation of the term, a first-class or even second class farming district. The whole surface of the country is traversed by ranges of Laurentian and Huronian rocks. The valleys lying between these ranges are no doubt fertile, and capable of supporting thousands of families, and all those who have already settled here are prosperous. All the coarser grains thrive well, viz: oats, peas, beans, etc.,—wheat I do not consider a good crop generally. As a grass producing country this tract cannot be surpassed. Hay is a sure and generally a heavy crop. Potatoes, carrots, mangold wrutzel, turnips and all root crops are produced in abundance and of superior quality. All the smaller garden fruits do well, such as strawberries, currants and gooseberries; some apples have been produced here (from seedling trees generally), but have not proved a success. My own opinion is that apples, pears and plums are not to be produced here in remunerative quantities.

"The climate here is delightful during the summer and autumn, the winters are rigorous, the thermometer falling to 30 or 35° below O fahrenheit, but this extreme range seldom endures more than three days in succession, when the temperature again rises to its normal state of 12 to 8 degrees below in the night, and rising often above the freezing point during the day. I consider that to a person of ordinary robust frame and constitution the climate of this region is most agreeable; I prefer it to the climate of the Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair counties.

"The streams, rivers, inland small lakes, and all the waters abound with fish of excellent quality and great variety. The waters of Superior and Huron afford at their fisheries employment to hundreds of people, and the fish form an article of trade in which large amounts of capital are invested, yielding remunerative profits.

"The forests have cariboo, *i.e.* American rein-deer, some red-deer *(cervus virginensis)*, and all the fur-producing animals furnish employment to the trapper or amusement to the sportsman. Among the feathered game are to be found waterfowl of almost every species, partridge or ruffled grouse *(tetrao ventullus)* in myriads, also the spruce partridge *(tetrao canadaisis)*, the willow grouse (*tetrao salicita*—white in winter), also the Alpine hen; all the latter very abundant.

"I like Algoma as a residence for its healthfulness, its beautiful scenery, its quiet, peaceful and law-abiding inhabitants. Altogether Sault Ste Maire and its vicinity is one of the most enjoyable summer resorts on the lakes.

"In conclusion I would say I have not seen any *poor settler* who came here and took up land, who does not acknowledge that he has improved his circumstances and increased his means."

JUDGE WALTER MCCREA, of Sault Ste. Marie, whose thorough knowledge of the Algoma District has been gathered from years of travel and careful personal observation, writes as follows:

"I have resided at Sault Ste. Marie, in the District of Algoma, now nearly thirteen years and have a pretty good knowledge of the resources of the Eastern part. From Goulais Bay on Lake Superior, as far as the country is settled eastward to near Mississauga River on Lake Huron on the main shore, the land, although somewhat broken, produces almost all the crops which are usually grown in the older settled portions of Ontario, with the exception notably of Indian corn. Owing to the continuous lying snows of the winter the fall wheat is never

winter-killed, and I have seen as fine specimens grown here as anywhere in the Province. Spring wheat, barley, oats, and peas are somewhat late in ripening, but are usually fairly abundant crops. The pea crop is noted for its fine sample, and is free from the weevil. Root crops are excellent.

"Hay is generally good and the country fairly adapted to grazing purposes. What I have said respecting the north shore will apply equally to the islands of Manitoulin, Barrie, Cockburn and St. Joseph, with the addition that they have a limestone formation rendering the soil warmer and producing a quicker and earlier growth. Small fruits abound and although a few apples have been produced in favorite localities, other large fruits are not attempted to be grown. Generally, with regard to the agricultural capabilities of the part of which I have spoken, I think it may fairly compare with the valley of the Ottawa from the Chats upwards.

"There are large tracts of good pine in this region and lumbering is carried on to a very considerable extent. Copper, iron, and argentiferous galena have been discovered in various places, but with the exception of Bruce Mines, where large quantities of copper have been extracted, its mining resources may be said to be undeveloped. It is hoped and reasonably believed that the completion of the C. P. Railway through the District, and of one to Sault Ste Marie, connecting with others on the south shore of Lake Superior, will give an impetus to the progress of the country which it has not before felt.

"With regard to the western portion of the district, I have but little personal knowledge, but in a general way, besides being on the highway to our Great North-West, I am led to believe that its chief national resources will be its lumbering and mining capabilities."

Mr. E. Biggins, Editor and Publisher of the Algoma *Pioneer*, writes thus of Eastern Algoma, including the islands adjacent to the Canadian shore:

"For upwards of a quarter of a century the name 'Algoma District' has been a synonym for over one half of the Province of Ontario, and which has remained to a very great extent a veritable *terra incognita*. Until about fifteen years ago this extensive territory, embracing over 600 miles of coast line, if spoken of at all, was termed 'a God-forsaken country.' The Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald thought it such a worthless heritage that he seriously contemplated taking away our 'temporary judicial' organization and withdrawing all Government aid; and not until the year 1876, under Mr. Mowat's Administration, were any active steps taken by the Provincial

Government to develope this important part of Ontario. But in the meantime, the pioneer work of settlement had been going on and 'squatters' had poked their way into the district, forming the nucleus of the settlements, wide apart from each other, of to-day. Slowly the current of emigration turned in this direction as the pioneers sent out reports of the fruitfulness of the soil and the favorable climate. Grain of all kinds was found to do well, frost or snow very seldom injuring wheat, and midge, weevil, and hessian fly are unknown. Barley, oats and rye produce uncommonly well; peas, free from worms, grow to a very remarkable size, yielding very large crops. Roots and vegetables surpass everything seen in the older settlements. Long experience here shows the district to be *par excellence*, THE DAIRY FARM OF ONTARIO. Owing to the frequent heavy dews a parched pasture field is never seen, and the commonest breeds of cattle roaming 'in the commons' are kept in excellent condition. Every variety of soil is to be had, from heavy clay to sand and gravel, and strange to say, the sandy soils yield very fine crops for years without any perceptible depreciation. The country is broken by rocks and bluffs, but the intervening valleys are exceedingly fertile. Twenty years ago large sections were swept by forest fires, and the second growth is *poplar*, well adapted for paper manufacture, soon to become valuable. Explorers tell us that the pine forests northward are very valuable, immense 'limits' being already in the hands of lumber companies. The fisheries are a profitable industry, and properly guarded are likely to remain so for many years. At Manitoulin Island, Cockburn and St. Joseph's islands, Mississagua, Thessalon, Bruce Mines, Fort Finley, Sault Ste. Marie, Prince, Goulais Bay and Batchewaning thriving settlements have been established, and the agricultural population is counted by tens of thousands, with room for thousands more."

AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITIES OF THE THUNDER BAY DISTRICT.

JOHN AITKEN, of Port Arthur, whose long residence in the District and accurate observation may be gathered from the following:

"I came to Thunder Bay District in 1869 from Lancaster, Glengary, and have been a resident here ever since. The present site of Port Arthur was then woods, and I was obliged to underbrush enough of ground on which to pitch my tent. The only buildings were the Government building; now occupied by the Ontario Bank, a small store occupied by Marks Bros., and a

third small building, the boarding-house of Mr. Flaherty, on the present site of the Pacific Hotel. These constituted the then town. I was sent out to the Mattawin in the spring of 1870 to push forward the construction of the Dawson Road, in order to allow Col. Wolsley and the Red River Expedition to go through to Fort Garry to quell the Riel rebellion. I cleared away a plot on which the Col. could erect his tents, and my attention was first directed to the fertility of the soil by observing how abundantly the hay afterwards sprang up on the spot where the troops had encamped. In the following year, 1871, I planted a pail full of potatoes, taken from the steamer 'Algoma,' and the yield was remarkably good. In 1872 I removed my family to this farm and I have farmed there ever since. All kinds of crops, including fall wheat, have done well, and they have never suffered from frost. The climate in the district, although severe, is steady, and I have not felt the cold any more than in Eastern Ontario. Winds have been somewhat more freequent during the past two years than formerly. A great advantage to the farmers in the district is the high price they obtain for their products. I have never sold potatoes for less than a dollar per bushel, and last year's crop was sold for a dollar and a half. Turnips 40 cents per bushel. Beets $2.00 per bbl. Grain, which is used for local purposes, brings quite the average price to be obtained elsewhere. Peas grow specially well and there are no worms. There are no potato bugs either. The soil at the Mattawin is a heavy clay; it requires to be broken in the fall and thus pulverized by the frost. It is also improved by manure, and although heavy to work, is extremely durable. In a word I consider this district well suited for poor but industrious men, who have had experience in farming, and in proof of this I give you the case of a neighbor of my own, Matthew Hawkins, who, without any means whatever, took up a lot at the land office here (the total cost being $1, in addition to the necessary settlement duties for five years, after which the property becomes his) and who now estimates his crop and improvements at $400. The chief difficulty that settlers have to contend against the first year is the scarcity and high price of hay and oats. This prevents them from being able to keep teams of their own, and it is too expensive to hire them."

Mr. Scott Humphrey, Reeve of the Township of Oliver, says:

"I settled in Thunder Bay District in 1871. Have observed the capabilities of the land in the Townships of Oliver and neighboring districts. Every cereal, wheat, barley, oats

and peas, and all kinds of roots and vegetables can be grown here just as well as in the older sections of Ontario. The soil is a rich clay loam, just such as would be called good wheat land in the East. A part of the township has suffered from fires which have destroyed the soil somewhat. This requires manuring, but the virgin soil is as good as can be found anywhere. There is enough timber for farm use, and the climate is, I consider, good. I have never known the crops to suffer from frosts, and they have always come to maturity, although a little later than in the East."

THE MINERAL RESOURCES OF THUNDER BAY DISTRICT.

JUDGE ROBERT LAIRD, of Port Arthur, who has for years warmly interested himself in the development of the varied resources of North-Western Ontario, writes thus:

"A very erroneous impression generally prevails as to the natural resources of Thunder Bay, particularly in regard to the extent of its mineral resources. Its mineral wealth is doubtless the richest on the American continent, and would have long ago attracted more general attention, but for its isolated location. The following metals and minerals are found in very large paying quantities, and those heretofore properly developed have proved a source of immense revenue to the owners. The Silver Islet Mine took out over $3,000,000, at very little expense.

"The Rabit Mountain Mine proves to be richer than the Silver Islet. It is of black Silurian slate formation; large nuggets of solid black silver weighing several pounds have been found. So far, the vein is 40 feet wide, and only one wall found as yet; a great quantity of ore is in sight.

"Standing first among the richest discoveries of precious metals is the Jack Fish Gold and Silver Mine. It is operated by the Huronian Mining Company who work it, not as a speculation, but as a rich paying industry. The working vein is 8 feet wide, and consists of free gold, or what is known as Sylvanite ore, the richest ore known to miners; $49 is the lowest assay to the ton, and $5,971 the highest.

"In 1871, free gold was discovered at the height of land, but owing to the impossibility of getting in machinery or away quartz, it was not worked. The Diorite Dyke from Silver Islet to McKellar's Point on the main shore extends for 30 miles and all veins crossing it are rich in silver. McKellar's Point is being operated by a company with a capital of $1,000,000. Pie Island is stocked for $5,000,000.

"Native copper is found in large quantities, and is worked by an English company. The copper is similar to that found on the south shore of Lake Superior and is already increasing the wealth of the operators.

"Iron is found in endless quantities 42 miles from Port Arthur, and as coal can be laid down at this port for $3.20 per ton, it will not be long until all the iron and castings used in the North-West will be manufactured in this district.

"Zinc, massive iron pyrites, suitable for sulphuric acids, are found in great quantities; also baryta or heavy spar for paint, plumbago, soapstone, and a superior quality of old red sandstone, owned by the Neepigon Sandstone Company.

"The property of this company is a very valuable one and contains an almost inexhaustable quantity of fine old red sandstone. The island is about a mile and a half in length by half a mile in width; when one sees the immense mountain of brown free-stone it strikes the beholder with astonishment, for right there in plain sight is enough beautiful stone of the very best quality, to build up one of the largest cities in the world, and indeed this wonderful quarry must be seen to be fully appreciated. The rock face is from 60 to 100 feet high in places, and there is the further advantage that it does not require any stripping. Large amounts of the same have already been shipped to Chicago for substantial building purposes and ornamentation. It is believed that this Neepigon stone can be delivered in Toronto or any of the lake cities at a much lower price than the New England stone, and nearly, if not quite as cheaply as the Ohio sandstone, while in lasting qualities as a building material, it is far superior to both these stones."

THE MINERAL RESOURCES OF LAKE OF THE WOODS DISTRICT.

Mr. David K. Brown, who has spent much time in making careful explorations and whose competency to form an accurate judgment is undoubted, writes as follows of the gold-fields of Lake of the Woods:

"'Far off pastures look green' is a proverb which requires little adaptation to make it sufficient to account for the comparative neglect in which the Lake of the Woods gold-field has lain since its discovery. The men who made the first surveys had little means and if possible less knowledge of minning. The result was that their praiseworthy efforts at development were comparatively unproductive. It is yet considerably less than a year since capital was brought to

bear in the exploration of some of the better 'prospects' and it can be truthfully said that in no one instance has the result in any way impaired the confidence felt by the practical men at the helm of the various undertakings. By the erection of temporary machinery three of the incorporated companies have satisfactorily demonstrated that the auriferous and argentiferous quartz of this region carries the metals in paying quantities. The veins are all true fissures and sinking has demonstrated that increased depth gives increased richness with an increased body of ore. Some of these fissure veins cut the formation and others lie with it. Some of the veins are contact veins, and it would be difficult at the present stage of development to say whether the vein traversing a body of diorite, or the contact vein is the richer. The milling of quartz in this district has demonstrated that all of the ore is more or less base and cannot be heated to advantage by the free milling process. While there is often a large percentage of free gold in the rock, the major portion of the nobler metals is carried in the form of sulphurets of iron, copper, etc. For the treatment of iron sulphurets roasting furnaces will be required, the oxidization of the iron freeing the gold. Roasting will also be the more profitable method of making the commoner qualities of copper sulphurets. But in this district there are copper sulphurets carrying over twenty per cent of this metal, for the treatment of which the water-jacket furnace may be profitably brought into requisition. In one of the mines the ore carries such a large percentage of galena and zinc that the most profitable method of working will likely be found to be smelting, supplemented by the German zincing process. The baseness of the ore at once destroys all chance of an inexpensive treatment such as that employed mainly in the Black Hills; but the richness and body of the ore hold out satisfactory inducements for the erection of reduction works. In no new mining camp have more tempting surface showings ever invited the investment of capital. The following extract from a letter of Professor Chapman, Canada's distinguished mineralogist, is no more remarkable than many others that might be given from men of lesser note, but thoroughly reliable:

"'Sample No. 3 contains per ton of 2000 lbs. no less than 24 oz. 10 dwts. of pure gold in addition to a little silver. This corresponds in value to $506 per ton of ore. There was not the slightest sign of visible gold in the broken up fragments of the sample, so that this large result did not come from the accidental presence of a large particle or two of free gold, but from the invisible gold disseminated through the vein stone generally.'

"This rock was described by Professor Chapman as 'intermixed quartz, calcite and green chloritic slate, showing a few specs of pyrites in places, but no visible gold.'

"Had not the Canadian Northwest fallen into temporary financial disorganization in consequence of over speculation in land, the mining industry of the Lake of the Woods to-day would have been manifesting greater vitality. But it is only a question of time until the picturesque shores of the Lake will echo the roar of the falling stamps. Thus far I estimate the expenditure of Winnipeg capital in the mines at $95,000, a sum which elsewhere in dealing with this same class of rock is not deemed more than sufficient for thoroughly testing ore location. The money requisite to develope the industry is lying idle in the coffers of American mining magnates, who profess reluctance to embark in the work of development owing to the absence of patents for the lands. I have received assurances from men of eminent standing that they are prepared to invest their capital as soon as they can be assured of quiet possession in a more satisfactory shape than that contained in the Order-in-Council concerning priority of entry. I would earnestly urge a speedy settlement of this vexed question, as the evil to be worked by delay is incalculable and may be irremediable. The work of opening up this rich gold-field would also be facilitated by the publication of a chart showing the surveys made, most of these being tied-on to points not at present on the map, or to other locations, the precise position of which is known to only a few explorers and others closely identified with the mining industry. The mining law of Ontario, if it errs, errs on the score of liberality, and I am sure that if it were so amended as to restrict the size of the location to, say, 1500 feet along the lead, with a width of 600 feet, and including all dips, spurs and angles, those explorers who have already made entry for much larger tracts would cheerfully consent to the reduction, were the excess in cost of survey of the larger tract allowed to form part payment of the smaller allotment. The material interests of all concerned would also be promoted by the imposition of a stated amount of development to be accomplished within a certain period of the allotment, and the performance of this work to be antecedent to the issuance of a patent. In the Lake of the Woods we have a great heritage and it will be more than a pity if the money invested should be rendered practically waste from reasons which are within the control of those who are placed in authority over us."

THE PICTURESQUE SCENERY OF LAKE OF THE WOODS, RAINY LAKE AND RAINY RIVER.

MR. W. H. WILLIAMS, so widely and favorably known as the clever and brilliant descriptive correspondent of the Toronto *Globe* in the North-West, writes thus of the matchless scenery of the Lake of the Woods:

"This morning I took passage on board the steamer *Couchiching* for the purpose of visiting the Rainy River country and Fort Frances, as well as for the purpose of seeing something more of the charming scenery of Lake of the Woods. In former letters I have had occasion to refer to the beautiful scenery of this great North-Western archipelago, but volumes would fail to convey to the reader an idea of its bewildering beauties.

"The afternoon has been sunny and warm, with here and there a fleecy cloud islet floating in a June sky of the deepest and brightest blue. There has been just wind enough to raise a shining golden ripple on the broad sunlit traverses that occasionally open out between the clustering groups of smaller islands, while the narrow shadowed inlets between towering walls of spruce-crowned rocks have slept dark, glassy, and tranquil. One could never weary of such lovely, ever-changing scenery. Now the sides of the steamer are almost brushing the fantastically-coloured mosses that clothe steep, rocky walls on either side, while the hoarse snorting of her exhaust wakes a score of echoes above and all around her and the next moment she is ploughing a broad sunlit field of rippling, burnished gold. Now she is threading her winding path between yellow moss-covered islets of solid rock, and now she is slowly creeping in and out among jagged reefs whose black slimy jaws just peer above the shining waters as though they belonged to huge sub-marine monsters that were waiting to seize and drag her away down to their horrid lairs in the gloomy caves below. Long after the setting sun had set in such a flood of orange and purple as is only seen in these northern latitudes, and cast a dainty net-work of light and shadow upon the dancing waters away to the westward, but while still a soft glow of lemon gold lit up the North-Western horizon, the steamer "slowed down," and finally stopped, and then the sharp rattling of "running chains" told that she had come to anchor in the shelter of an island about two miles from the edge of the "Big Traverse." Though it is after ten o'clock meridian time the sunlight has not quite faded from the north and west, while the young moon lights up a silver

skimmering path away to the southward, whence comes a cool breeze fresh from the broad traverse toward which long vistas are opening out between far-off islets and fading away into misty space.

AN EXTREMELY FERTILE DISTRICT.

"Fort Frances is at the head of navigation on Rainy River, and some 80 or 90 miles from its mouth. During the trip I have just completed I have been able to learn something by personal observation concerning the country through which the river runs, and from what I have seen I must in candour admit that for settlers of moderate or small means I do not know of a spot in the Dominion offering a more inviting field for immigration. Here there are no prairies, it is true, and every foot of land that the settler cultivates must first be cleared. On the other hand, however, the soil is of practically inexhaustible fertility while every tree on the settler's claim is of more or less immediate value to him. Here he has material for buildings, fencing, and fuel ready to his hand, and yet the labor of clearing off this light timber is comparatively trifling. There are few, if any large stumps to remove, and scarcely a log to be seen that two men could not handle with comparative ease. The lumbermen engaged in these districts bring a market for all the farm produce he can raise right to his own door. In fact all the farmer has to do to sell his produce is to step into his birch canoe, paddle out and hail almost any passing tug and sell for cash every dollar's worth of produce he has to spare. But should the rapid influx and increasing prosperity of settlers so increase the supply of farm produce as to make it outrun the demand, the Rainy River farmer has cheap and unbroken water communication with Rat Portage, during the whole season of navigation, where he can put his produce on board the C. P. R. for the markets of the world. That he will ever have occasion to do this, however, is extremely doubtful. There is very little farming country near Rat Portage, and it will take far more than the farm supplies of Rainy River to meet the wants of the very large mining, lumbering and manufacturing population that is sure to pour in there within the next few years.

"The fertility of the soil in this region is wonderful, a fact amply proven by the fact that the Hudson Bay Company has raised excellent crops off land that has been under crop steadily for over forty years without receiving a single pound of manure. Indeed the settlers now farming along the Canadian shore of the river raise magnificent crops every year. The winters are severe, but the locations are so shelt-

ered and fuel is so plentiful that settlers should have no difficulty in keeping warm all winter. The summers, though not long, have always proved sufficiently long for the thorough ripening of all sorts of crops and garden produce, the growth of which is greatly promoted by the warm, humid summers. At present, of course, that great barrier to the prosperity of this region, the unsettled boundary question, operates banefully here as in all other portions of the Disputed territory; but, notwithstanding all this, the Rainy River settlements are steadily growing. Even now, however, some Canadian settlers are locating on the Minnesota side of the river, where they consider they can be moderately sure of their titles, even if they have to swear allegiance to a foreign power to secure them."

OPINION OF A MISSIONARY WHO HAS RESIDED TWENTY YEARS IN THE DISTRICT OF ALGOMA.

Rev. RICHARD BAXTER, Missionary of the Society of Jesus, and a most careful observer, writes:—

"My experience from 1863 on the borders of Lake Huron, North Shore and Sault Ste. Marie River: I am aware that on St. Joseph's Island which divides the North Shore from the South Shore channels, that there are many portions of fertile land and some rocky, yet all good for pasture. In the neighborhood of the Bruce Mines and Thessalon, as well as Mississaga River, there are fertile lands. Around Sault Ste. Marie wheat ripened. Fine vegetables were raised at the Catholic Mission, Garden River. There is much good land for farming from Sault Ste. Marie to the Bruce Mines, on a forty mile road.

"1872.—My experience from 1872 at Thunder Bay neighborhood, &c: I saw Mr. John Aikins cultivating grain and vegetables with success on the borders of the Matewan River, where the Dawson Road crosses said river, twenty-six miles and a half from Prince Arthur's Landing. In 1872 I saw oats ripen at the Askondigan Station, near the Askondigan River, on the Dawson Route, about forty miles from Prince Arthur's Landing. At the Kaministiquia River Bridge, twenty-one miles from P. A. Landing, the Reid family succeeded since 1871 in raising good crops of grain and vegetables. On the Body farm near Finmark or Sunshine Station, I saw well-developed wheat and ripe, and excellent vegetables. Barley is successfully cultivated in the vicinity. The country for miles is rolling and heavy clay. Grass is abundant along the railway and in the whole country many islands in the inland lakes are fertile. For instance in the Wabigoon Lake, two hundred

miles from P. A. Landing, Indians cultivate good crops of fine potatoes; also in Eagle Lake, two hundred and thirty odd miles from P. A. Landing. In the Township of Oliver there is a fertile belt in close proximity to a speckled trout stream, where Captain Corbett's farm shows off to advantage. In many localities bush fires have burnt off the surface soil, thus necessitating more careful and studied cultivation. On the borders of the Kaministiquia River at Town Plot, Fort William, Sill's Farm, Indian Catholic Mission on right bank of the Kaministiquia River, the alluvial requires good cultivation and is greatly remunerative.

PORT ARTHUR AND THUNDER BAY.

"P. A. Landing is a beautiful site for the outlet of the North-West on the C. P. R., at the head of Canadian Lake navigation. Its atmosphere is salubrious; the scenery almost enchanting—Thunder Cape, Pie Island, McKay's Mountain, Rabbit Mountain, forming about a semi-circle of culminating points of admiration and picturesqueness unrivalled on Lake Superior, or perhaps the world. The Amphiatheatral form of Prince Arthur's Landing site is one of ursurpassed grandeur. The view from the surrounding heights inspires feelings of delight.

"In the neighborhood of Prince Arthur's Landing and Thunder Bay there are numerous speckled trout streams. Health and amusement are here guaranteed to the traveller in search of repose and relaxation of mental effort. From Prince Arthur's Landing to Red Rock on the Nepigon Bay there are occasional portions of arable land, especially forty miles below Prince Arthur's Landing. Red Rock is about sixty-four miles below P. A. Landing. Near Red Rock is Black Sturgeon River, requiring dredging over the bar into Thunder Bay. There is some good land near Red Rock. Lake Superior and Thunder Bay are noted for precious stones and precious minerals. Silver Islet, about three-quarters of a mile from the shore, has produced an immense quantity of silver. The Islet is forty feet long, sixteen feet wide, twelve feet in length, and about 9 feet above water; the remaining portion was scarcely above the water level. The whole has been cribbed, and contains several large boarding houses and offices. Fresh water oozed through the mine crevices down to a depth of 900 feet. Below that, to 1150 feet salt water was found. I send a bottle, which I certify to as genuine. In several caves in Lake Superior alum deposits have been found. Perhaps alum and salt preserve that great Island sea from containing putrified waters.

THE UNSETTLED BOUNDARY RETARDING DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES.

Mr. E. M. RIDEOUT, of Rat Portage, writing of a mining enterprise in which he is interested there, says:

"An early settlement of the boundary question, which is such an important factor in retarding mining interests in Lake of Woods District, would solve the question of opening this and many other valuable properties."

EMINENT TESTIMONY.

SIR GEORGE SIMPSON, who, some years ago, made an overland journey of the Rainy River district, speaks thus of its producing capabilities:

"The river during the day's march, passed through forests of elm, oak, pine, birch, &c., being studded with isles not less lovely and fertile than its banks, and many spots reminded us of the rich and quiet scenery of England. The paths of the portages were spangled with violets, roses, and many other wild flowers, while the currant, the gooseberry, raspberry, plum, cherry, and even the vine, were abundant."

The REV. PRINCIPAL GRANT, in his "Ocean to Ocean," bears similar testimony:

"The flora is much the same as in our Eastern Provinces; the soil light, with a surface covering of peaty or sandy loam, and a subsoil of clay, fairly fertile, and capable of being easily cleared. The vegetation is varied, wild flowers being specially abundant, raspberries, currants, gooseberries, and tomatoes: flowers like the convolvulus, roses, a great profusion of asters, wild kallos, water lillies on the ponds, wild viches on the rocks in the streams, and generally a rich vegetation. It is a good country for emigrants of the farmer class. The road, too, is first-rate, and the market is near. The Valley of the Kaministiquia is acknowledged to be a splendid farming country. Timothy grass was growing to the height of four feet on every vacant spot from chance seeds. A bushel and a half of barley which was all a squatter had sown, was looking as if it could have taken a prize at an Ontario Exhibition."

PROF. MACOUN says:

"I could see nothing in the flora to lead me to doubt the feasibility of raising all the cereals in the valley of the Kaministiquia, a valley said by Prof. Hind to contain an area of more than 20,000 acres, exclusive of Indian reservations."

S. J. Dawson, M.P., in 1874 testified as follows:

"Alluvial land of the best description extends along the banks of Rainy River in an unbroken stretch of 75 or 80 miles from Rainy Lake to Lake of the Woods. In this tract where it borders on the river there is not an acre unsusceptible of cultivation. At intervals there are old park-like Indian clearings, partly overspread with oak and elm, which although they have sprung up naturally, have the appearance of ornamental plantations. The whole district is covered with forests, and Canadian settlers would find themselves in a country similar in many respects to the land of their nativity. Nor does the climate differ essentially from that of the most favoured parts of Ontario or Quebec. Wheat was successfully grown for many years at Fort Frances, both by the old North-West Company and their successors, the Hudson Bay Company. The Indians still cultivate maize on little farms on Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods. In many places the wild grape grows in extraordinary profusion, yielding fruit which comes to perfection in the fall. Wild rice, which requires a high summer temperature, is abundant, and indeed the flora, taken generally, indicates a climate in every way well adapted to the growth of cereals.

"The Lake of the Woods receives the drainage of an area which may be approximately estimated at 33,600 square miles. In this vast district there are, of course, considerable varieties of climate, soil, and natural productions; but I desire expressly to draw attention to the fact that it reaches nearly to the northern and north-western limits of the growth of pine wood of the class known in Ontario and Quebec as red and white pine—that is, in the region eastward of the great prairies. Within this district, on the streams tributary to Rainy Lake, there are in many places extensive groves of both red and white pine, of a size and quality well adapted to all the purposes for which such timber is usually applied. On the alluvial belt of Rainy River white pine of a large size is to be seen, interspersed with other descriptions of forest trees, and on the islands of the Lake of the Woods and main land to the north and east there are occasionally pine groves of moderate extent; but on proceeding to the north, by way of the Winnipeg, it gradually becomes more rare until, on reaching Lake Winnipeg, it finally disappears."

VERBAL AND OTHER TESTIMONY TO THE SAME EFFECT.

Verbal and written testimony of a similar nature to the above has reached me from many sources, but the limits of this sketch do not permit its presentation. Judge Lyon and the Rev. Mr. Halstead, Rat Portage; Hugh Sutherland, M. P., Winnipeg; Sheriff Clarke, Thunder Bay; W. H. Simpson, Sault St. Marie; R. A. Lyon, M.P.P., Manitoulin, and other well known residents, all unite in describing the whole of the vast region from Spanish River to the Northwest Angle to be, from all standpoints, "much better than it looks."

Reference might also be briefly made to the admirable location and excellent prospects of several rising towns in the territory, notably Sault St. Marie, picturesquely situated upon the connecting link between Lakes Huron and Superior, and destined to be an important railway point; Port Arthur, with its really grand location on Thunder Bay, and rapidly rising to be the most important of Western Canadian shipping ports, besides being also a chief railway centre; and Rat Portage beautifully situated on the Lake of the Woods and designed by nature for a pretty and popular summer resort. Nor should the value of Northwestern Ontario as a pleasant place of resort for summer tourists be lightly estimated. The shores and islands of Lakes Huron and Superior, and the rugged, rock-bound and tree-girdled points and islands of Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake and Rainy River; not less than the countless Lakelets, Rivers and Falls, which meet the eye continuously from Thunder Bay to the Western Boundary of Ontario, afford to Canadians a variety of picturesque scenery, and facilities for fishing, boating and hunting equal to any that can be enjoyed within easy reach on this continent. With well-equipped and carefully managed steamboat lines, and the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which will in two or three years more traverse nearly the whole territory, Canadians may soon enjoy, under their "own vine and fig tree," well nigh all the beauties and comforts to be had in a tour of the St. Lawrence or the Lakes of Muskoka.

But the one great drawback, the present chief barrier to

a speedy development and early settlement of this vast territory, is the unsettled boundary question. Until that has been finally disposed of, its gold and silver mines, so attractive for investment, will lie dormant; capitalists will continue to shun the timber resources of the territory; and the sturdy settler, who, rather than betake himself to the boundless prairie, would prefer to hew out for himself a home where the gun, the rod and the canoe may relieve the monotony of his agricultural pursuits, will refuse to risk the fruits of his honest toil in a "no man's land," where the title to his heritage is a subject of doubt and controversy.

That so serious, vexatious, and deplorable a barrier to Provincial progress and inter-Provincial amity between two members of Confederation, may be peacefully and speedily removed, must be the sincere desire and earnest prayer of all patriotic Canadians.

G. R. PATTULLO,
Ontario Commissioner.

RAT PORTAGE, ONTARIO, Sept. 12, 1883.

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N. B.—Mr. Dignum was late Manager of the office of Kerr & Anderson, Accountants, Real Estate Agents, &c., Toronto.

Winnipeg References—D. S. Miller, Esq., Manager Merchants' Bank; McArthur & Dexter, Barristers, etc. Toronto References—Kerr & Anderson; Elias Rogers & Co.; Samuel Rogers & Co.

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G. R. PATTULLO,
Ontario Commissioner.

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